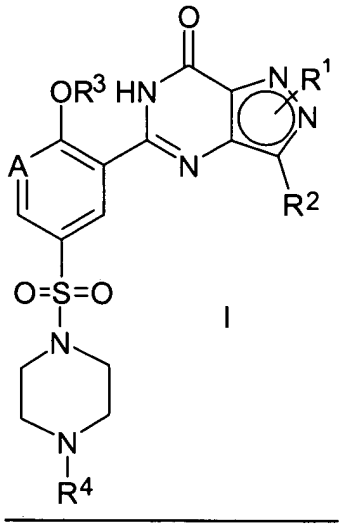
Amendments To The Claims

1-16 (Canceled)

17. (currently amended) A process for the production of a compound of general formula I:



I

wherein

A represents CH or N;

R^1 represents H, lower alkyl (which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by O), Het, alkylHet, aryl or alkylaryl, which latter five groups are all optionally substituted (and/or, in the case of lower alkyl, optionally terminated) by one or more substituents selected from halo, cyano, nitro, lower alkyl, OR^5, $C(O)R^6$, $C(O)OR^7$, $C(O)NR^8R^9$, $NR^{10a}R^{10b}$ and $SO_2NR^{11a}R^{11b}$;

R^2 and R^4 independently represent lower alkyl;

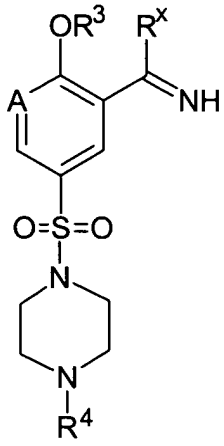
R^3 represents lower alkyl, which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by oxygen;

Het represents an optionally substituted four- to twelve-membered heterocyclic group, which group contains one or more heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen and sulfur;

R^5, R^6, R^7, R^8, R^9, R^{11a} and R^{11b} independently represent H or lower alkyl;

R^{10a} and R^{10b} either independently represent, H or lower alkyl or, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached, represent azetidinyl, pyrollidinyl or piperidinyl,

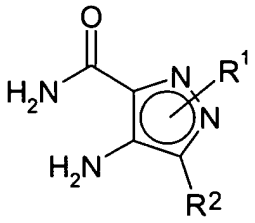
which process comprises the reaction of a compound of formula II,



II

wherein R^x is a group substitutable by an aminopyrazole and A, R^3 and R^4 are as defined above,

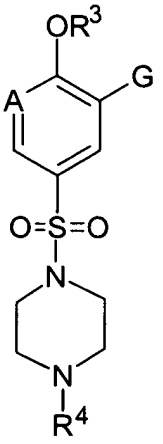
with a compound of general formula III,



III

wherein R^1 and R^2 are as defined above

and ~~A process as claimed in any one of the preceding claims,~~ wherein the compound of formula II is prepared by way of reaction of a compound of formula IV,



IV

wherein G represents a carboxylic acid group (-C(O)OH) or a derivative thereof, ~~and A, R^3 and R^4 are as defined in any one of Claims 1 and 6 to 10 (as appropriate),~~ with an appropriate reagent for converting the group G to a –C(R^x)=NH group~~, wherein R^x is as defined in any one of Claims 1 or 11 to 13~~.

18. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 17, wherein, in the compound of formula IV, the group G represents -CN, -C(OR^e)$_3$, -C(O)NH_2 or -C(=NOR^f)NR_2, wherein R^f represents H or lower alkyl and R^e is ~~as defined in Claim 11~~ lower alkyl (which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by O), Het, alkylHet, aryl or alkylaryl, which latter five groups are all optionally substituted (and/or, in the case of lower alkyl, optionally terminated) by one or more substituents selected from halo, cyano, nitro, lower alkyl, OR^5, C(O)R^6, C(O)OR^7, C(O)NR^8R^9, $NR^{10a}R^{10b}$ and $SO_2NR^{11a}R^{11b}$.

19. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein, when R^x represents -OR^e (wherein R^e represents lower alkyl (optionally interrupted by O), alkylHet or alkylaryl):

(a) a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -CN is reacted with an alcohol of formula VA,

$$R^{\alpha}OH \qquad \text{VA}$$

wherein R^{α} represents lower alkyl (optionally interrupted by O), alkylHet or alkylaryl, and Het is as defined in Claim 17 ~~Claim 1,~~ in the presence of a protic acid;

(b) a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -C(O)NH_2 is reacted with an appropriate alkylating agent of formula VB,

$$R^{\alpha}\text{-}Z^1 \qquad \text{VB}$$

wherein Z^1 represents a leaving group and R^{α} is as defined above; or

(c) a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -C(OR^{α})$_3$, wherein R^{α} is as defined above, is reacted with ammonia, or an *N*-protected derivative thereof.

20. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein, when R^x represents -OR^e (wherein R^e represents Het or aryl), a corresponding

compound of formula IV in which G represents -CN is reacted with a compound of formula VC,

$$R^{\beta}OH \qquad VC$$

wherein R^{β} represents Het or aryl, and Het is as defined in ~~Claim 1~~ Claim 17.

21. (original) A process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein, when R^x represents

$-NH_2$:

(a) a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -CN is reacted with hydrazine, hydroxylamine or *O*-lower alkyl hydroxylamine, followed by reduction of the resultant intermediate under standard conditions; or

(b) a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents $-C(=NOR^f)NR_2$, wherein R^f is as defined in Claim 18, is reduced under standard conditions.

22. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein, when R^x represents

$-NH_2$, $-NHR^a$ or $-N(R^b)R^c$, a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -CN is reacted with a compound of formula VD,

$$HN(R^{\chi})(R^{\delta}) \qquad VD$$

wherein R^{χ} and R^{δ} independently represent H or R^a, and R^a is ~~as defined in Claim 11~~

lower alkyl (which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by O), Het, alkylHet, aryl or alkylaryl, which latter five groups are all optionally substituted (and/or, in the case of lower alkyl, optionally terminated) by one or more substituents selected from halo, cyano, nitro, lower alkyl, OR^5, $C(O)R^6$, $C(O)OR^7$, $C(O)NR^8R^9$, $NR^{10a}R^{10b}$ and $SO_2NR^{11a}R^{11b}$.

23. (original) A process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein, when R^x represents -SH:

(a) a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -CN is reacted with hydrogen sulfide; or

(b) a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents $-C(O)NH_2$ is reacted with a reagent that effects oxygen-sulfur exchange.

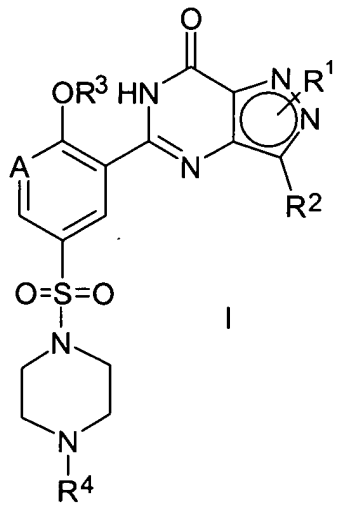
24. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein, when R^x represents $-SR^d$, a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -CN is reacted with a compound of formula VE,

R^dSH VE

wherein R^d is ~~as defined in Claim 11~~ lower alkyl (which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by O), Het, alkylHet, aryl or alkylaryl, which latter five groups are all optionally substituted (and/or, in the case of lower alkyl, optionally terminated) by one or more substituents selected from halo, cyano, nitro, lower alkyl, OR^5, $C(O)R^6$, $C(O)OR^7$, $C(O)NR^8R^9$, $NR^{10a}R^{10b}$ and $SO_2NR^{11a}R^{11b}$.

25. (original) A process as claimed in Claim 18, wherein, when R^x represents halo, a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents
$-C(O)NH_2$ is reacted with a halogenating agent.

26.(currently amended) A process for the production of a compound of general formula I:



I

wherein

A represents CH or N;

R^1 represents H, lower alkyl (which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by O), Het, alkylHet, aryl or alkylaryl, which latter five groups are all optionally substituted (and/or, in the case of lower alkyl, optionally terminated) by one or more substituents selected from halo, cyano, nitro, lower alkyl, OR^5, $C(O)R^6$, $C(O)OR^7$, $C(O)NR^8R^9$, $NR^{10a}R^{10b}$ and $SO_2NR^{11a}R^{11b}$;

R^2 and R^4 independently represent lower alkyl;

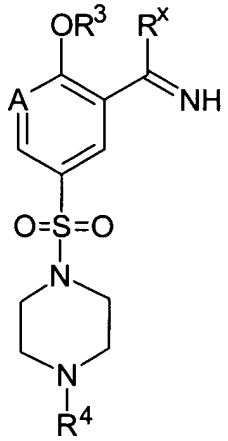
R^3 represents lower alkyl, which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by oxygen;

Het represents an optionally substituted four- to twelve-membered heterocyclic group, which group contains one or more heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen and sulfur;

R^5, R^6, R^7, R^8, R^9, R^{11a} and R^{11b} independently represent H or lower alkyl;

R^{10a} and R^{10b} either independently represent, H or lower alkyl or, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached, represent azetidinyl, pyrollidinyl or piperidinyl,

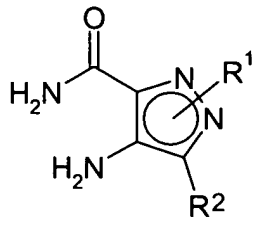
which process comprises the reaction of a compound of formula II,



II

wherein R^x is a group substitutable by an aminopyrazole and A, R^3 and R^4 are as defined above,

with a compound of general formula III,



III

wherein R^1 and R^2 are as defined above

and ~~A process as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 16,~~ wherein the compound of formula II is prepared by way of reaction of another compound of formula II with a reagent that will convert one R^x group to another~~, wherein R^x is as defined in any one of Claims 1 or 11 to 13~~.

27. (original) A process as claimed in Claim 26, wherein, when R^x represents $-OR^e$ (wherein R^e represents lower alkyl, alkylHet or alkylaryl), a corresponding compound of formula II in which R^x represents Cl is reacted with a compound of formula VA, as defined in Claim 19.

28. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 26, wherein, when R^x represents $-NH_2$, $-NHR^a$ or $-N(R^b)R^c$, a corresponding compound of formula II in which R^x represents Cl, -SH, $-SR^d$ or $-OR^e$, wherein R^d and R^e are lower alkyl (which alkyl group is optionally interrupted by O), Het, alkylHet, aryl or alkylaryl, which latter five groups are all optionally substituted (and/or, in the case of lower alkyl, optionally terminated) by one or more substituents selected from halo, cyano, nitro, lower alkyl, OR^5, $C(O)R^6$, $C(O)OR^7$, $C(O)NR^8R^9$, $NR^{10a}R^{10b}$ and $SO_2NR^{11a}R^{11b}$ ~~as defined in Claim 11~~, is reacted with an appropriate compound of formula VD, as defined in Claim 22, or an acid addition salt thereof.

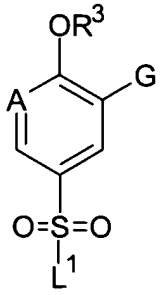
29. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 26, wherein, when R^x represents $-SR^d$, a corresponding compound of formula IV in which R^x represents

-SH is reacted with a compound of formula VF,

R^d-Z^2 VF

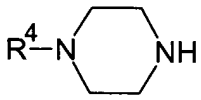
wherein Z^2 represents a leaving group and R^d is as defined in ~~Claim 11~~ Claim 28.

30. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 17, ~~any one of Claims 17 to 25,~~ wherein the compound of formula IV is prepared by reaction of a compound of formula VI,



VI

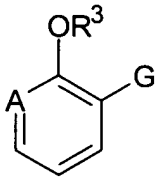
wherein L^1 is a leaving group and A, G and R^3 are as defined in Claim 17 ~~any one of Claims 1, 6, 7, 10, 17 and 18 (as appropriate)~~, with a compound of formula VII,



VII

wherein R^4 is as defined in Claim 17 ~~any one of Claims 1 and 8 to 10~~.

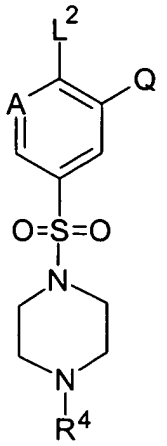
31. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 30, wherein the compound of formula VI is prepared by reaction of a compound of formula VIII,



VIII

wherein A, G and R^3 are as defined in Claim 17, ~~any one of Claims 1, 6, 7, 10, 17 and 18 (as appropriate),~~ with a reagent that may be used for the introduction of a $-SO_2L^1$ group into an aromatic or heteroaromatic ring system.

32. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 17, ~~any one of Claims 17 to 24,~~ wherein the compound of formula IV is one in which G represents -CN or $-C(O)NH_2$, and is prepared by reaction of a compound of formula IX,



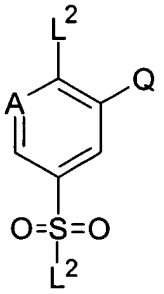
IX

wherein Q represents -CN or -C(O)NH_2[[,]] and L^2 represents a leaving group, ~~and A and R^4 are as defined in any one of Claims 1 and 8 to 10,~~ with a compound that will provide the group R^3O.

33. (original) A process as claimed in Claim 32, wherein the compound that will provide the group R^3O is a lower alkyl alcohol.

34. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 32, ~~or 33,~~ wherein the leaving group L^2 is chloro.

35. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 32, ~~any one of Claims 32 to 34,~~ wherein the compound of formula IX is prepared by reaction of a compound of formula X,



X

~~wherein Q and L^2 are as defined in Claim 32, and A is as defined in Claim 1,~~ with a compound of formula VII as defined in Claim 30.

36. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 17, ~~any one of Claims 17 to 24,~~ wherein the compound of formula IV is one in which G represents -CN, and is prepared by dehydration of a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents $-C(O)NH_2$.

37. (currently amended) A process as claimed in Claim 17, ~~any one of Claims 17 to 19, 23 and 25,~~ wherein the compound of formula IV in which G represents $-C(O)NH_2$ is prepared from a corresponding compound of formula IV in which G represents -C(O)OH by reaction with ammonia or a derivative thereof.

38. (currently amended) A compound of formula II, as defined in Claim 17 ~~any one of Claims 1 and 11 to 13~~.

39. (original) A compound according to Claim 38 wherein A represents –CH, R^3 represents Et, R^4 represents Me and R^x represents NH_2.

40. (original) A compound according to Claim 38 wherein A represents –CH, R^3 represents Et, R^4 represents Et and R^x represents NH_2.

41. (currently amended)) A compound of formula IV, as defined in Claim 17 ~~or Claim 18~~.

42. (currently amended) A compound according to ~~Claim 39~~ Claim 41 wherein A represents N, R^3 represents Et, R^4 represents Et and G represents CO_2H.

43. (currently amended) A compound according to ~~Claim 39~~ Claim 41 wherein A represents N, R^3 represents Et, R^4 represents Et and G represents CO_2Et.

44. (currently amended) A compound according to ~~Claim 39~~ Claim 41 wherein A represents -CH, R^3 represents Et, R^4 represents Et and G represents CN.

45. (currently amended) A compound according to ~~Claim 39~~ Claim 41 wherein A represents -CH, R^3 represents Et, R^4 represents Me and G represents CN.